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The Voice of the Spirit.

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RESPONSIVE SERVICES

FROM THE "IMITATION OF CHRIST."

SELECTED AND ARRANGED

BY

LEWIS G. WILSON.

If we traverse the world, it is possible to find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without wealth, without coin, without schools and theatres; but a city without a temple, or that practiseth not worship, prayers, and the like, no one ever saw. — PLUTARCH.

HOPEDALE:
GUILD OF À KEMPIS.
1891.

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Give me strength to resist, patience to endure, constancy to persevere.

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PREFACE.

It was found by the Guild of à Kempis that, while the "Imitation of Christ" was a mine of deeply religious and practical thought, suitably arranged for responsive reading, it yet contained much which was addressed directly to the monastic life of the time in which it was written. It seemed highly desirable, therefore, to select and arrange such verses as should form a series of services applicable to present needs. To this end the "Imitation" has been freely used. Other selections have been made to complete these simple services, and it is believed that, while this little book will be found of much value in the home, it will most of all supply a much-felt need among the young people's religious societies of the present day.

L. G. W.

NOTICE.

All passages in *italics* are to be *read in unison;* all other passages by the one who conducts the service.

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First Service.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, which was and which is and which is to come.

O Light Eternal, transcending all created lights, dart Thy bright beams from above, and penetrate the inmost recesses of my heart.

Cleanse, gladden, brighten, and enliven my spirit with all its powers, that I may cleave to Thee with ecstasies of joy.

O, when shall that blessed and longed-for hour arrive, when Thou wilt satisfy me with Thy Presence, and be to me All in all.

Until this is granted to me, my joy will not be full.

Thou makest us to think well of all, and to praise Thee in all circumstances; and nothing without Thee can afford any lasting pleasure; but if any thing is to be pleasant and delightful, Thy grace must accompany it, and Thy wisdom must impart a relish to it.

This is my hope and my only consolation, to fly to Thee in every trouble, to trust in Thee, to call upon Thee from my inmost heart, and to wait patiently for Thy consolation.

"Assist me, O God, in this my good purpose, and in Thy Holy Service; and grant that this day I may begin perfectly, for that which I have hitherto been able to carry out is as nothing."

My son, hear My words; My words are most sweet, surpassing all the knowledge of the philosophers and wise men of the world.

My words are spirit and life, and are not to be weighed by man's understanding. Neither are they to draw us to a vain complacency,

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but they are to be heard in silence, and to be received with all lowliness and with great affection.

And I said, "Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of Thy law: that Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, and that he may not be desolate in the earth."

I — saith the Lord — have taught the prophets from the beginning, and even now I do not cease to speak to all; but many have hardened their hearts, and are deaf to My voice.

Many would rather listen to the world than to God, and more readily follow the desires of the flesh than the Will of God.

That which is valueless is sought after; for one coin sometimes there is a disgraceful litigation; for a trifling thing and a slight promise men shrink not from fatigue day and night.

But, alas! for a changeless good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honour, and eternal glory, they soon grow weary even with a very little labour.

Blush, therefore, O slothful and complaining servant, that those are found more ready to labour for death than you for life.

They rejoice more in vanity than you do in the truth.

Sometimes, indeed, they fail to realise their hopes; but My promise never fails, nor sends him empty away who trusts in Me.

What I have promised, I will grant; what I have said, I will fulfil; if only a man abides in My love — faithful to the end.

I am the Rewarder of all who are good, and the Mighty Prover of all who are devout.

Write My words on your heart, and meditate diligently upon them, for they will be found to be very needful in time of temptation.

What you cannot understand when you read, you shall know in the day of visitation.

In two ways am I in the habit of visiting My elect, namely, by temptation and by consolation; and daily I read to them two lessons, one by rebuking their vices, the other by stimulating them to advance in virtues.

Give me strength to resist, patience to endure, constancy to persevere.

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May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardor, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty —
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion, ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible,
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

Our heavenly Father, we invoke Thy blessing upon our lives. Be thou our Guide to higher wisdom, our Strength in hours of weakness, our Hope always, and the object of our constant faith. And Thine be the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Second Service.

Canst thou by searching find out God?
Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?
It is high as heaven; what canst thou do?
Deeper than the grave; what canst thou know?
The measure thereof is longer than the earth,
And broader than the sea.
If thou set thine heart aright,
And stretch out thine hands towards him;
If iniquity be in thy hand, put it far away,
And let not unrighteousness dwell in thy tents;
Surely then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot;
Yea, thou shalt be steadfast, and shalt not fear:
And thy life shall be clearer than the noonday;
Though there be darkness, it shall be as the morning,
And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope.

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Thou, O my God, art supremely good above all; Thou only art most High; Thou only art most powerful; Thou only art most rich and self-sufficient; Thou only art most sweet and full of consolation; Thou only art most lovely and most loving; Thou only art most noble and glorious above all things, in Whom all good things are, were, and ever shall be, in perfection.

In Thee, therefore, O Lord, my God, I place my whole trust and refuge, on Thee I cast all my tribulation and distress, for I find everything weak and unstable which I behold out of Thee.

For neither do a number of friends profit us, nor can strong helpers assist, nor prudent advisers give useful counsel, nor books of learned men console, nor any precious substance redeem, nor any place, however secret, protect, unless Thou Thyself assist, help, strengthen, comfort, instruct, and guard us.

For all the things which seem calculated to bring peace and happiness, without Thee are nothing, and bring no true happiness at all.

Thou, therefore, art the end of all good, the highest life, the deepest wisdom that can be uttered; and to trust in Thee above all is the strongest comfort of all Thy servants.

To Thee do I look up; in Thee do I trust, my God, Father of mercies!

Bless and sanctify my soul with heavenly blessing, that it may become Thy holy habitation, and the seat of Thy eternal glory; and let nothing be found where Thou deignest to dwell that may offend the eyes of Thy Majesty.

Now I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent; I will say in the ears of my God, and of my King Who is on high, — "O how great is the abundance of Thy Goodness, O Lord, which Thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee."

But what art Thou to those who love Thee? what to those who serve Thee with all their heart?

Truly unspeakable is the sweetness of contemplating Thee, which Thou dost bestow on them that love Thee.

O Lord, what is my hope which I have in this life, or what is my greatest comfort which I have from all visible things under heaven?

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Is it not Thou Thyself, O Lord my God, whose mercies are without number?

And, therefore, whatever Thou givest me is small and insufficient, unless Thou givest me Thyself; and what Thou revealest or promisest concerning Thyself does not satisfy, whilst Thou Thyself art neither seen nor fully possessed.

For indeed my heart cannot truly rest, nor be entirely contented, unless it finds its rest in Thee, and mounts above all gifts and above all creatures.

Wherefore you cannot, O my soul, be fully comforted, nor perfectly refreshed except in God, Who is the Comforter of the poor and the Defender of the humble.

I am He Who lifts up "those who mourn to safety"; and those who recognise their own weakness, I call to the participation of My Divinity.

O God, the Truth, make me ever one with Thee in everlasting love!

Let nothing be high, nothing great, nothing pleasing, nothing acceptable to me, except God Himself, or what is of God.

O Power, more near my life than life itself,
I fear not Thy withdrawal; more I fear,
Seeing, to know Thee not, hoodwinked with dreams
Of signs and wonders, while, unnoticed, Thou
Walking Thy garden still, commun'st with men,
Missed in the commonplace of miracle.

Help us, O God, to know Thee and obey Thy commands. Amen.

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Third Service.

Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.

"Trust in the Lord, and do good," saith the prophet, "so shalt thou dwell in the land and be fed."

"*Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him?*"

Human reason is weak and fallible, but true faith cannot be deceived.

Faith is required of you, and an upright life; not depth of intellect, and subtle knowledge of the Mysteries of God.

I must be content with the light of true faith, and walk in it, until the Day of eternal brightness breaks, and the shadows of figures pass away.

My son, patience and humility in adversity are more pleasing to Me, than much consolation and devotion in prosperity.

Why are you so grieved at every little thing which is said against you?

If it had been much greater, you ought not to have been troubled at it.

But now dismiss it from your thoughts; it is not the first trial, nor any thing new, neither will it be the last, if you continue to live.

All things pass away, and you pass away with them.

Is there anything hard for Me? or shall I be like one who says but does not do?

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Where is your faith? Stand firmly and perseveringly, be patient and brave; comfort shall come to you in due season.

Wait for Me, wait; I will come and heal you.

It is a temptation which vexes you, and a vain fear which terrifies you.

What does your anxiety about future events — events which may never happen — bring you but sorrow upon sorrow?

"*Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*"

When was it ever well with me without Thee? or when could it be ever ill with me, when Thou wert present?

I would rather be poor for Thee, than rich without Thee.

I would choose rather to be a pilgrim on earth with Thee, than to possess Heaven without Thee.

Where Thou art, there is Heaven; and where Thou art not, there is death and Hell.

Thou art my desire; and therefore I must sigh and cry after Thee, and call earnestly upon Thee.

In short, there is none whom I can fully trust in, to bring me the help which I need in my times of trial, but Thou alone, my God.

Thou art my hope, my confidence, and my comforter; and most faithful art Thou in all things.

Let not, then, your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid; trust in Me, and confide in My mercy.

When you think yourself far off from Me, I am often very near to you.

When you think that almost all is lost, then often the opportunity for much gain is at hand.

All is not lost, when anything goes contrary to you.

"*Watch and pray,*" *saith the Lord,* "*that ye enter not into temptation.*"

O Lord God, to Thee, therefore, do we lift up our eyes; in Thee, our God, the Father of Mercies, do we put our trust. Bless and sanctify our souls, that they may become the holy habitation, and the seat of Thine eternal glory; and let nothing be found in us displeasing in Thy sight. Protect and keep us amidst all dangers; and, accompanying us by Thy grace, direct us along the way of peace to Thine everlasting home. Amen.

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Fourth Service.

Theories, which thousands cherish,
  Pass like clouds that sweep the sky;
Creeds and dogmas all may perish;
  Truth herself can never die.

From the glorious heavens above her,
  She has shed her beams abroad,
That the souls who truly love her
  May become the sons of God.

Thrones may totter, empires crumble,
  All their glories cease to be;
While Truth, Christ-like, crowns the humble,
  And from bondage sets them free.

God himself will e'er defend her
  From the fury of the foe,
Till she in her native splendour
  Sits enthroned o'er all below.

Strengthen me, Eternal Truth, that no vanity may be able to affect me.

Come to me, O Thou Sweetness Celestial, and let all impurity flee before Thy Face.

Pardon me also, and mercifully look upon me, as often as I wander from Thee in my prayer.

For I am very often not there where in body I am standing or sitting, but I am rather there where my thoughts have borne me.

Where my thoughts are, there am I; where my thoughts habitually are, there is that which I love.

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That readily occurs to me, which naturally delights me, or by habit is pleasing.

Wherefore Thou, O Eternal Truth, hast plainly said, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

If I love Heaven, then my thoughts will run on heavenly things.

If I love the world, I shall rejoice about temporal happiness, and find sorrow in temporal adversity.

If I love the flesh, I shall very often dwell upon the things of the flesh.

If I love the spirit, I shall find pleasure in thinking on spiritual things.

Men can indeed sound forth words, but cannot convey the Spirit.

They speak most beautifully, yet, if Thou art silent, their words do not reach the heart.

They deliver the words, but Thou openest the understanding.

They bring forth mysteries, but Thou unfoldest the sense of what is signified.

They proclaim precepts, but Thou helpest us to keep them.

They show the way, but Thou strengthenest us to walk in it.

They act upon us only outwardly, but Thou teachest and enlightenest the heart.

They water the surface, but Thou vouchsafest the increase.

They cry aloud with words, but Thou givest understanding to the hearers.

Let not Moses, then, speak to me, but Thou, O Lord, my God, Eternal Truth, lest, if I only hear with the outward ear, and am not inwardly enkindled, I die and become unfruitful; lest the Word, heard but not acted upon, known but not loved, believed but not kept, be turned to my condemnation.

Therefore "speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth"; for "Thou hast the words of eternal life."

Speak to me, that it may be for some comfort to my soul, and for the amendment of my whole life, and also for Thy eternal praise, glory, and honour.

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Let all teachers be silent, and let the universe hold its peace in Thy Presence, and speak Thou only to me.

Blessed and true is that solace which is felt within from the Truth.

The voice which comes from books is one, but the meaning it conveys is not equally comprehended by all; for I am the internal Teacher of Truth, the Searcher of hearts, the Discerner of the thoughts, the Mover of the actions, distributing to every man as I think right.

Son, walk before Me in truth, and ever seek Me with simplicity of heart.

He who walks before Me in truth shall be preserved from evil assaults, and the truth shall deliver him from deceivers, and from the slanders of the wicked.

If the truth shall have made you free, you shall be free indeed, and shall take no account of the vain sayings of men.

O Lord, Thy word is true, may it ever be with me!

May Thy truth teach me, may it guard me, and keep me safe unto the end; let it free me from all bad and inordinate affections, and then I shall walk before Thee in great liberty of heart.

Happy is the man whom Truth directly teaches, not by means of figures and passing sounds, but as it really is in itself.

I in a moment can lift up the humble mind, and make it enter more deeply into the principles of Eternal Truth, than if one had studied ten years in the schools.

I teach without the sound of words, without the strife of opinions, without ambition of honour, without the contention of controversy.

Men pass away; but "the truth of the Lord endureth for ever."

The Spirit of Truth will guide you into all truth; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

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Fifth Service.

Still will we trust, though earth seem dark and dreary,
And the heart faint beneath his chastening rod;
Though rough and steep our pathway, worn and weary,
Still will we trust in God!

Let us press on in patient self-denial,
Accept the hardship, shrink not from the loss:
Our guerdon lies beyond the hour of trial,
Our crown beyond the cross.

O Lord God, patience is very necessary, as I perceive, for there is much that goes contrary to us in this life.

Whatever a man cannot amend either in himself or in others, he ought to bear patiently, until God orders things otherwise.

Consider that it may be advantageous that it should be so, for your trial and growth in patience, without which our good deeds are of little worth.

Your sufferings are little in comparison with the sufferings of those who bore so much, who were so strongly tempted, were so grievously afflicted, so variously tried and exercised.

You ought, then, to recall to mind the heavier trials of others, that you may bear more lightly your own little troubles.

And if they do not seem very small to you, take care that it be not your impatience which magnifies them.

Whether, however, they are small or great, try to bear all with patience.

It is no great thing for a man to be devout and fervent when he has nothing to try him; but if in the time of adversity he bears up patiently, then there is hope that he has made considerable progress in religion.

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Some are preserved from great temptations, and are often overcome by those which daily occur; so that, being thus humbled, they may never presume upon themselves in great matters, who in small things find themselves weak.

My son, commit your cause always to Me ; I will manage it well at the right time.

Wait for My ordering of it, and you shall thereby find that you make progress.

Do you think that you will always have spiritual consolations whenever you please?

My Saints did not always have them, but had many afflictions, and different kinds of temptations, and great spiritual desolation.

But they bore all patiently and trusted rather in God than in themselves; knowing that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared to the reward of future glory.

Do you wish to have at once that, which others after many tears and great labours have hardly won?

Wait for the Lord, act manfully and be of good courage; be not distrustful, and do not give way, but lay out body and soul continually for the glory of God.

I will reward you most abundantly, and be with you in every trial.

Many secretly seek their own interest or pleasure in what they do, and are not aware of it.

They seem, also, to enjoy peace as long as things turn out according to their own will; but if they are thwarted, they are quickly disturbed and depressed.

From a diversity of tastes and opinions, it is by no means a rare occurrence for dissension to arise between friends and fellow-citizens, and between religious and devout persons.

An old habit is with difficulty given up, and no one is willingly led away from his own views.

If we were a little severe with ourselves at the beginning, we should afterwards be able to do all things with ease and delight.

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Wait a little, O my soul, wait for the Divine promise, and you shall have abundance of all good things in Heaven.

Strive to be patient in bearing the defects of others and their manifold infirmities; because you yourself have many also, and they have to put up with them.

If you are not yourself such as you would wish to be, how can you expect to find another according to your liking?

For our worthiness and progress in our state of life are not reckoned by the number of our sweetnesses and consolations, but by patient endurance of many hardships and trials.

Are not those to be called hirelings, who are always seeking consolation?

If therefore you do not employ on all sides the shield of patience, you will soon be wounded.

Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations; knowing that the proof of your faith worketh patience. And let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing.

Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Amen.

Sixth Service.

Man is only a reed, the feeblest in nature; but he is a thinking reed. The whole universe must not rise in arms to crush him. A vapor, a drop of water, suffices to kill him. But, if the entire universe were to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which slays him, because he knows that he is dying; and of the advantage which the universe possesses over him the universe knows nothing. Thus all our dignity consists in thought. It is

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that upon which we must take our stand, not upon space and duration. Let us, then, labour to think well; that is the principle of morals.

He to whom the Eternal Word speaks is delivered from a multitude of disputes.

I counsel thee to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest become rich, that is, heavenly wisdom, which treads under foot all that is base.

I have said, that you must buy for yourself things low and contemptible in human estimation, instead of those which are accounted precious and high.

For heavenly wisdom is indeed in the eyes of men worthless, of little account, and almost ignored, in that it exalts not self, nor seeks to be magnified on the earth.

Many indeed proclaim it with their mouth, but are far from it in their life, yet it is the pearl of great price which but few find.

He who estimates all things according to their true value, and not according to their name or reputation, is indeed a wise man, and taught of God rather than of man.

I have often heard it said, that it is safer to listen and take advice than to give it.

Be careful, then, not to trust too much to your own judgment, but be willing to hear what others have to say.

No one can with safety command who has not already learnt to obey.

No one can with safety rejoice, unless he has the testimony of a good conscience.

Neither does he possess true moral wisdom, who in time of adversity or of any difficulty gives way to despair, and in his mind and feelings suffers the confidence which he should have in Me to lessen.

There is a great difference, indeed, between the wisdom of an illuminated and devout man, and the knowledge of a literary man or studious divine.

Much more noble is the wisdom which is from above and from the Divine influence, than that which is laboriously acquired by the human intellect.

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All perfection in this world has some imperfection coupled with it; and none of our investigations are without some obscurity.

If you are not solicitous about yourself now, who will be solicitous about you hereafter?

How often have I failed to find faithfulness, where I thought myself sure of it!

How often too have I found it, where I least expected it!

What is all flesh in Thy Sight? Shall the clay boast itself against Him that fashioned it?

How can he be puffed up by vain words whose heart is in truth subjected to God?

Not all the world could lift him up, whom the Truth had subjected to itself; neither shall he be moved by the praise of a multitude of men, who has firmly set all his hope in God.

For they also who praise him, behold they are all nothing, and shall pass away with the sound of their words; but "the truth of the Lord endureth forever."

For there is none like unto Thee amongst all the wonders of heaven and earth.

Thy works are very good, O Lord; Thy judgments are true, and Thy Providence governs the universe.

Praise therefore and glory be to Thee, O Wisdom of the Father; let my mouth, my soul, and all created things together, praise and bless Thee.

Mighty One, before whose face
Wisdom had her glorious seat,
When the orbs that people space
Sprang to birth beneath Thy feet!

Source of Truth, whose beams alone
Light the mighty world of mind!
God of Love, who from Thy throne,
Watchest over all mankind!

Shed on those who, in Thy name,
Teach the way of Truth and Right,
Shed that Love's undying flame,
Shed that Wisdom's guiding light.

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Seventh Service.

When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul leave
To do the like; our bodies but forerun
The spirit's duty. True hearts spread and heave
Unto their God, as flow'rs do to the sun.
Give him thy first thoughts, then; so shalt thou keep
Him company all day, and in Him sleep.

Lift up your eyes to God on high, and pray him to forgive your sins and negligences.

Leave vanities to the vain, but give your attention to those things which God has commanded you.

My son, I ought to be your highest and your last end, if you desire to be truly blessed.

By this intention shall your affections be purified, which are too often wrongly bent towards yourself and towards created things.

Therefore you should refer all things principally to Me, for I am He Who gave you all.

Regard each separate blessing as flowing from the Supreme Good; and therefore to Me, as to their Source, must all things be referred.

From Me, small and great, poor and rich, as from a living fountain, draw living water; and those who render me a free and willing service shall receive grace for grace.

But he who desires to glory out of Me, or to delight in some private good, shall not be established in true joy, nor be enlarged in his heart, but shall meet with many hindrances, and be much straitened.

For I am the Judge and the Discerner of the secrets of all hearts; I know how the matter stands; I know who is the injurer, and who is the injured.

He rides with ease enough who is borne up by the grace of God.

And what wonder if he feels no burden, who is carried by the Omnipotent one, and led by the Sovereign Guide?

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Be more calm, and gird yourself to greater endurance.

All is not lost, because you feel yourself very often tried or much tempted.

You are man, and not God; you are flesh, and not an Angel.

Keep a good conscience, and God will well defend you.

The perversity of man cannot injure those whom God wills to befriend.

We ought to be as ready to read a devotional book which is quite simple, as we are to read those which enter deeply and learnedly into their subjects.

If we place our progress in religion only in outward observances, our spiritual life will soon come to an end.

The devotions of some consist only in their books, of others in their pictures, of others in outward signs and gestures.

Some have Me on their lips, yet seldom in their hearts.

There is then no sanctity, if Thou, O Lord, withdraw Thy hand.

No wisdom is of avail, if Thou cease to direct.

No courage helps, if Thou do not continue to defend.

No chastity is secure, if Thou do not protect it.

No watchfulness of our own avails, if Thou keep not Thy holy guard over us.

For when we are forsaken by Thee, we sink and perish; but when we are visited by Thee, we are raised up and live.

Indeed of ourselves we are unstable, but through Thee we are strengthened; of ourselves we grow cold, but by Thee we are enkindled.

Devoutly look, and nought but wonders shall pass by thee;
Devoutly read, and then all books shall edify thee;
Devoutly speak, and men devoutly listen to thee;
Devoutly act, and then the strength of God acts through thee.

O God, the Life of the faithful, the Joy of the righteous, through our prayers may our lives be deepened, our faith strengthened, our love enkindled, and Thy blessed kingdom established in the hearts of all. Amen.

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Eighth Service.

Fear never but you shall be consistent in whatever variety of actions, so they each be honest and natural in their hour. For of one will the actions be harmonious, however unlike they seem. These varieties are lost sight of when seen at a little distance, at a little height of thought. One tendency unites them all. The voyage of the best ship is a zigzag line of a hundred tacks. This is only microscopic criticism. See the line from a sufficient distance, and it straightens itself to the average tendency. Your genuine action will explain itself, and will explain your other genuine actions.

"Blessed is that servant," saith St. Luke, "whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching. Verily, I say unto you, He will make him ruler over all that He hath."

As long as you live, you will be subject to change, even against your will; so that you will be found at one time merry, at another sad; at one time peaceful, at another disturbed; at one time devout, at another indevout; at one time diligent, at another sluggish; at one time grave, at another light.

But he who is wise and well-instructed in spirit stands above these fluctuations, not minding what he feels in himself, nor which way the wind of natural instability blows; but only that the whole bent of his soul might be set towards the right and the best end.

For thus he will be able to remain one and the same and unshaken, if he keeps, through so many changing events, the eye of his intention simply and constantly directed towards Me.

But the greater the purity of the intention is, the greater will be the constancy with which you will pass through the various storms.

In many, however, the eye of a pure intention is weak, for it quickly looks at some pleasure which meets it; and seldom is any one found who is entirely free from the stain of some self-seeking.

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He who only avoids the outward occasion of falling, and does not uproot the inner tendency to evil, will make but poor progress; indeed, temptations will the sooner return to him, and with greater force than ever.

By degrees, and with patience and long-suffering, you will by the help of God overcome, better than by harshness and your own impetuosity.

Often take counsel in time of temptation, and never be harsh with one who is tempted, but console him as you would wish to be consoled yourself.

The beginning of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and too little trust in God.

Our success depends upon the strength of our purpose; and if we would make much progress we must use much diligence.

But, if one often fails after making a strong resolution, how will it fare with those who seldom make any good purpose, or who purpose without firmness?

To-day you confess your sins, and to-morrow you commit again the same faults you confessed.

Now you purpose to be on your guard, and in an hour's time you act as if you had made no purpose at all.

For as a ship without a rudder is driven hither and thither by the waves, so a man who is negligent and inconstant is tempted in manifold directions.

Those who are with you to-day may be against you to-morrow, and the opposite may be the case, for men often change like the wind.

When some one in suspense — who had often wavered between fear and hope — on a certain occasion, being oppressed with grief, had prostrated himself in prayer before an altar, he said within himself, "O that I could know that I should persevere to the end!" and immediately he heard a voice within him reply: "And if you knew it what would you do? Do now what you would do then, and you shall be quite secure."

Ye shall observe to do therefore as the Lord your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to

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the left. Ye shall walk in all the way which the Lord your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.

Help us, O God, to walk in Thy way, to obey Thy precepts, to fulfil Thy will. Amen.

Ninth Service.

Peace, peace on earth! the heart of man for ever
Through all these weary strifes foretells the day;
Blessed be God, the hope forsakes him never,
That war shall end and swords be sheathed for aye.

Peace, peace on earth! for men shall love each other,
Hosts shall go forth to bless and not destroy;
For men shall see in every man a brother,
And peace on earth fulfil the angel's joy.

Be at peace, first in yourself, and then you will be able to bring others into peace.

A peaceful man does more good than a learned man.

A passionate man even turns good into evil, and readily believes evil.

A good peaceful man turns everything to good.

He who is truly in peace never suspects others. But he who is ill at ease and discontented, is disturbed by various suspicions; neither does he rest himself, nor let others rest.

He often says what he ought not, and often omits to do what he ought. He busies himself about what others ought to do, and neglects his own duty.

Let your zeal begin upon yourself, and then you may with justice extend it to your neighbours.

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You know well enough how to excuse and palliate your own faults, but you are not willing to accept excuses for others.

If you had not gone forth and listened to idle reports, you would the better have continued to enjoy the blessing of peace. But in that you sometimes take pleasure in hearing news, it must follow that you suffer some disturbance of mind.

Those who are advanced in holiness do not at once give credit to every evil rumour; because they are conscious that human frailty makes men but too prone to relate evil, and to slip with the tongue.

O, if men were as diligent in uprooting vices and planting virtues as they are in starting questions there would not be so many evils and scandals in the world as there are now.

It would be more just were you to accuse yourself, and excuse your brother.

If you wish to be borne with yourself, bear with others.

See what a distance you are as yet from that true charity and humility, which admit of indignation or anger against no one except yourself.

It is no great thing to live peacefully with the good and gentle; for this is naturally pleasing to all, and every one likes to be at peace, and prefers those who agree with them.

But to be able to live in peace with those who are hard and obstinate, or who are undisciplined and contrary, is a great grace, and a highly praiseworthy and manly line of conduct.

There are some who are at peace in themselves, and live at peace with others.

And there are some who neither have peace in themselves, nor leave others in peace; these are a burden to others, and a greater burden still to themselves.

And others, again, there are who live in peace, and endeavour to bring others into the same condition.

And yet all our peace in this life is to consist in humbly bearing, not in escaping, the things we do not like.

He who knows best how to suffer aright, will be the one to enjoy the greater measure of peace. Such a man has gained the victory over himself, and is master of the world, and friend of Christ, and heir of Heaven.

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Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge between the nations, and shall reprove many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter and then cease;
And like a bell, with solemn, sweet vibrations,
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, "Peace."

Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of war's great organ shakes the skies!
But beautiful as songs of the immortals,
The holy melodies of love arise.

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Amen.

Tenth Service.

To think, to feel, to love, and be loved
By beings sinless, stainless, and by Him
Whose smile lights up this radiant universe!
Oh, 'tis a dream too glorious for man's soul
To grapple with!

Render most abundant thanks to the Heavenly Goodness, which treats you so graciously — visiting you mercifully, enkindling you fervently, sustaining you powerfully, lest by your own tendency you sink down to the things of earth.

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Open, O Lord, my heart to Thy law, and teach me to walk in Thy commandments.

Grant me to know Thy will, and to call to mind, with much reverence and careful consideration, Thy benefits, — one by one as well as all together — in order that I may be able to give thanks for them.

All that we have in soul and body, whatever we possess, outwardly and inwardly, naturally and supernaturally, are Thy benefits, and proclaim Thee to be beneficent, kind, and good, from Whom we have received all good things.

And if one has more, another less, yet all is from Thee, and without Thee the least thing cannot be held.

He who has received the greater blessings cannot boast of his own merit, neither can he be extolled above others, nor deride another who is less favoured; because it is the man who ascribes less to himself, and in his gratitude is more humble and fervent, who is really the greater and the better.

Give to God what is God's, and attribute to yourself what is your own; that is, give to God thanks for His Grace, and perceive that you must ascribe to yourself only the fault, and the punishment which is due to the fault.

O what thanks am I bound to pay Thee, because Thou hast vouchsafed to shew to me and to all the faithful the right and the good way to Thine eternal Kingdom.

For Thy Life is our way, and by holy patience we advance towards Thee, Who art our Crown.

Unless Thou hadst preceded us, and taught us, who would have cared to follow?

But true glory and holy rejoicing consist in glorying in Thee, not in himself; in rejoicing in Thy Name, not in his own goodness; and in finding delight in no creature, save for Thy sake.

Let Thy Name be praised, not mine; let Thy work be magnified, not mine; let Thy Name be holy.

Thou art my glory, Thou art the joy of my heart.

All things come from Thee, and on that account Thou art to be praised for all.

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Be, then, thankful for that which is least, and you shall be worthy of greater gifts.

We thank Thee for the sunshine and the moonlight, for summer's stores and winter's healthful snow, for the radiant earth and solemn sea, for fruits and flowers, and brutes and birds, for our own wondrous frames of flesh, for sight and hearing, taste and smell and feeling, for sleep, for language, for human love, for intellect and memory, for all the wondrous powers which permit the child of yesterday to converse with the dead of all the ages, and to soar in thought through the realms of boundless space.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Eleventh Service.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God.

He does much who loves much.

Love is a great thing, in every way a great good; it alone can make the heavy burden light, and bears with evenness all inequalities. For it bears a burden without a sense of its weight, and makes every bitter thing sweet and pleasant.

Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing broader, nothing more pleasant, nothing better either in Heaven or earth, because love is born of God; and rising above all created things, can find its rest in Him alone.

One who loves, flies, runs, rejoices, and is free and unrestrained.

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Love gives all for all, and has all in all, for it rests in Him Who is Sovereign and above all, and from Whom every good flows and proceeds.

Love looks not at the gift, but has its eye upon the Giver more than upon all goods.

Love often knows no limits, but is fervent beyond all bounds.

Love never feels a burden, never thinks things tasks, willingly attempts what is above its strength, never argues that things are impossible; because all things seem to it possible and lawful to be undertaken.

It seems able to do all things, and it does effect much, and takes in hand that which he who loves not would faint under and lie down.

Love watches, and slumbering does not sleep; if weary, it wearies not; if restrained, it is not straitened; if fearful, it is not dismayed; but as a living flame and glowing torch it bursts upward, and safely keeps its onward course.

Love wishes to tend upwards and not tc be held back by things beneath.

Love is swift, sincere, tender, pleasant, and sweet, courageous, patient, faithful, wise, long-suffering, noble, and never self-seeking; for whenever any one seeks his own advantage, he then falls from love.

Love is circumspect, humble, and upright; not yielding to softness, levity, or vanity; love is sober, steady, chaste, quiet, and keeps a guard over all the senses.

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; even as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

All things that are on earth shall wholly pass away,
Except the love of God, which shall live and last for aye.
The forms of men shall be as they had never been;
The blasted groves shall lose their fresh and tender green;
The birds of the thicket shall end their pleasant song,
And the nightingale shall cease to chant the evening long;
The kine of the pasture shall feel the dart that kills,
And all the fair white flocks shall perish from the hills.

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The goat and antlered stag, the wolf and the fox,
The wild boar of the wood, and the chamois of the rocks,
And the strong and fearless bear, in the trodden dust shall lie;
And the dolphin of the sea, and the mighty whale, shall die.
And realms shall be dissolved, and empires be no more,
And they shall bow to death, who ruled from shore to shore;
And the great globe itself, so the holy writings tell,
With the rolling firmament, where the starry armies dwell,
Shall melt with fervent heat — they shall all pass away,
Except the love of God, which shall live and last for aye.

Twelfth Service.

We pierce mountains, we fly round the world, electricity, microscopes, telephones, wars, parliaments, philanthropy, the struggle of parties, universities, learned societies, museums, — is this life?

The whole of man's complicated, seething activity, with their trafficking, their wars, their roads of communication, their science and their arts, is, for the most part, only the thronging of the unintelligent crowd about the doors of life.

Follow Me; "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Without the Way, you cannot go; without the Truth, you cannot know; without the Life, you cannot live.

I am the Way, which you ought to follow; the Truth, which you ought to believe; the Life, which you ought to hope for.

I am the Way, unchangeable; the Truth, infallible; the Life, endless.

I am the straightest Way, the Sovereign Truth, the true Life, the blessed Life, the Life uncreated.

If you abide in My way you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free, and you shall lay hold of eternal life.

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If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.

If you wish to know the truth, believe Me.

If you wish to be perfect, sell all.

If you wish to be My disciple, deny yourself.

O Lord, I willingly enough commit all things to Thee, for my anxiety is of little avail.

O that I did not cling so much to plans for the future, but yielded myself up unhesitatingly to Thy good pleasure.

My son, often a man hotly pursues something which he desires, but when he has gained it, he begins to feel differently; for the affections are not wont to remain long on one object, but rather urge us on from one thing to another.

It is, therefore, of no small importance to forsake self even in the smallest things.

A man's real spiritual advancement consists in the denying of himself, and the man who has formed the habit of self-denial is very much at liberty and is secure.

Certainly, a lowly peasant who serves God is better than a proud philosopher, who, to the neglect of his own soul, studies the course of the heavens.

He has great tranquillity of heart, who cares neither for praises nor reproaches.

He will be easily content and at rest, whose conscience is pure.

Keep a good conscience, and you will always be happy.

A good conscience can bear very much, and is able to be very cheerful even in adversity.

A bad conscience is always timid and uneasy.

You will enjoy a sweet peace, if your heart does not condemn you.

Never rejoice, unless you have done well.

The wicked never feel true joy, neither do they experience inward peace; for "there is no peace," saith the Lord, "unto the wicked."

Whom shall I trust, O Lord, whom shall I trust but Thee?

Thou art the Truth, which neither can deceive, nor be deceived.

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A humble knowledge of ourselves is a surer way to God than profound scientific research.

Learning, however, when considered in itself, or knowledge upon any subject, is not to be disparaged; for it is good, and ordained of God.

But what is meant is, that a good conscience and a virtuous life are always to be preferred to it.

Many strive more to become learned than to become good; and the consequence is they often go astray, and bring forth little or no results from their labours.

Fear nothing so much, and find fault with and flee nothing so much, as your own vices and sins, which ought to be more displeasing to you than all worldly losses.

Some do not walk in sincerity before Me, but through curiosity and conceit are allured by the wish to know secret things, and to understand the deep things of God, to the neglect of the knowledge of themselves, and of their own salvation.

The life of a good religious person ought to be enriched with all virtues, so that his inner life might accord with his outward profession.

Indeed his inner life ought to be in advance of his outer; for God beholds the heart, and before all others we are bound to reverence Him wherever we may be, and — like the angels — to keep ourselves pure in His Sight.

O Thou great Friend to all the sons of men,
Who once appeared in humblest guise below,
Sin to rebuke, to break the captive's chain,
And call thy brethren forth from want and woe!

We look to Thee: Thy truth is still the light
Which guides the nations, groping on their way,
Stumbling and falling in disastrous night,
Yet hoping ever for the perfect day.

Yes: Thou art still the Life; Thou art the Way
The holiest know, — Light, Life, and Way of Heaven;
And they who dearest hope, and deepest pray,
Toil by the light, life, way, which Thou hast given.

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Thirteenth Service.

Judge not: the workings of his brain
And of his heart thou canst not see;
What looks to thy dim eyes a stain,
In God's pure light may only be
A scar brought from some well-won field,
Where thou wouldst only faint and yield.

And judge none lost: but wait and see,
With hopeful pity, not disdain:
The depth of the abyss may be
The measure of the height of pain,
And love and glory that may raise
The soul to God in after days.

Turn your eyes upon yourself, and avoid passing judgment upon other men's doings.

In judging others a man labours to no purpose, very often errs, and easily falls into sin.

Grant me, O Lord, to know what I ought to know, to love what I ought to love, to praise what delights Thee most, to value what is precious in Thy sight, to hate what is offensive to Thee.

Do not suffer me to judge according to the sight of my eyes, nor to pass sentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant men; but to discern with a true judgment between things visible and spiritual, and above all things always to inquire what is the good pleasure of Thy will.

When men judge according to their senses, they often err; and the lovers of the world, by loving visible things only, are deceived.

For what is a man the better, for being thought greater by man?

The deceitful deceive the deceitful; the vain deceive the vain; the blind, the blind; the weak, the weak, when he extols him;

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and, indeed, when he is giving him empty praise, he is rather putting him to shame.

For a man is what he is in Thy sight, and nothing more.

We cannot put much trust in ourselves, because we often stand in need of grace and wisdom.

The light which is in us is but little, and we soon lose it by negligence.

We oftentimes, too, forget how great our inward blindness is.

We often do wrong; and, what is worse, excuse ourselves.

Sometimes, also, we are actuated by passion, and think it zeal.

We blame others for slight things, and overlook greater things in ourselves.

We are quickly enough sensitive about what we suffer from others, and dwell upon it; but what they have to bear from us, that we never think of.

He who well and rightly considers his own doings is not likely to judge hardly concerning another.

Never will you become spiritual and devout, unless you are silent concerning others, and keep a special watch over yourself.

We must have charity towards all, but indiscriminate familiarity is not good. Sometimes it happens that a person who is unknown to us has a bright reputation, whilst his presence at once causes him to sink in the opinion of those who are in his company.

We think to find favour with others when we get on intimate terms with them; and the contrary is the result, for they are soon displeased by the faults which they discover in us.

It is great wisdom not to be hasty in action, nor to hold obstinately to one's own opinion; as also not to believe everything you hear, nor — even if you do believe it — at once to give it currency.

Why do you want to put yourself before others, seeing there are many more learned than yourself, and more versed in the Law of God?

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And if any one did know who was the holier or greater in the Kingdom of Heaven, what would this knowledge profit him, unless on account of it he grew more humble in My Sight, and was stirred up to a greater praise of My Name?

Our Father, may we, Thy human children, learn to love one another, not with mere sentiment, but with truth, and a charity that will show itself in all the phases of life. May we feel that to love is better than to be great; is better than to be refined; is better than to be wise; that love is higher than hope and faith, and is the very royalty of God. We are perpetually proving one another and judging one another; and yet, all the time, we are depending upon the infinite forbearance and love of God. Teach us, we beseech of Thee, the whole of love, — of its forbearance and gentleness, of its kindness and patience, of its charitableness and richness. Work out in us thine attributes. Help us to walk in the footsteps of Thy most faithful, obedient, and loving son, Jesus Christ. Help us to become Thy loving and dutiful children. Amen.

Fourteenth Service.

Courage, brother! do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble:
Trust in God and do the right.
Though the road be long and dreary,
And its ending out of sight,
Foot it bravely, strong or weary:
Trust in God, and do the right.

My son, you ought to aim diligently at this, that, in every place, action, and outward employment you may be inwardly free and

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self-controlled; and that all things may be under you, and not you under them.

That you may be lord and master of your own actions, and not a slave or hireling.

Why do you disturb yourself when things do not fall out according to your own wish and desire?

Who is there that has everything according to his own will? — neither I, nor you, nor any living man.

There is no one in the world without some trouble or distress, though he be king or pontiff.

Who is it who is best off? He indeed who is able to suffer something for God.

We like others to be bound by strict rules, but we ourselves will in nowise endure restraint.

Thus it is evident, then, how rarely we weigh our neighbour in the same balance in which we weigh ourselves.

If all were perfect, what then should we have to suffer from others for the sake of God?

But now God has so ordained it, that we should learn to bear one another's burdens, for there is no one who has not some defect, no one without some burden, no one independent of others, no one wise enough of himself; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and advise one another.

The degree of virtue any one possesses is best manifested in times of adversity. Trials do not cause human frailty, but they serve to display what a man really is.

It is little enough to have to bear sometimes a few words, when you cannot yet take well hard blows.

And why do such small things go to your heart, if it is not that you care more for human opinion than you should?

For because you shrink from being despised, and do not like to be reproved for your faults, you try to shelter yourself under excuses.

We would have others perfect, yet nevertheless we do not amend our own faults.

We would see others severely corrected, yet we do not wish to be corrected ourselves.

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Fire proves iron, so temptation tries a just man.

We are often ignorant of the amount of power we possess, but temptation makes manifest to us what we are.

You are brave enough, when nothing goes against you; you can give good advice and know how to strengthen others by your words, but when sudden tribulation is at your door, you yourself fail in counsel and in courage.

There are, moreover, temptations which are positively advantageous to us, though in themselves they may be troublesome and grievous; for by them a man is humbled, purified, and taught.

There is no vocation so holy, and no place so retired, as to be beyond the reach of temptation and adversity.

No man can be entirely free from temptations as long as he lives, because the source of temptations is in ourselves.

Thou knowest how little I am able to bear, and how soon I am cast down, when a slight trouble arises.

But regard My words, and you will not care for ten thousand words of men.

Behold, if all, which with the bitterest malice they could invent, should be said against you, what hurt would it do you, if you suffered it to pass entirely away, and did not care a straw about it?

Could they pluck even one hair out of your head?

But those who do not lead an inward life, and have not God before their eyes, are easily disturbed by a word of blame.

It is often a small matter which casts me down and saddens me.

I propose to myself to act bravely, but when a small temptation comes, I am at once in great perplexity.

Sometimes it is a very trifling thing which gives rise to a great temptation.

Whilst I think myself fairly safe, before I am aware of it, I find myself sometimes almost overcome by a slight breath of wind.

For the love of God, you ought to be ready to undergo all things, that is to say, all labours, sorrows, trials, vexations, distresses, necessities, infirmities, injuries, reproaches, reproofs, humiliations, shame, corrections, and contempt.

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These are the things which aid us in forming virtues; these things are the tests of the young.

Help us, Heavenly Father, to be brave and very courageous; to overcome temptations within and without, and to labour right on, in the face of all opposition and discouragement, that Thy great purpose of raising Thy children above all sin and error may be accomplished. Amen.

Fifteenth Service.

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things Thee to see;
And what I do in anything,
To do it as for Thee.

To scorn the sense's sway,
While still to Thee I tend;
In all I do, be Thou the way,—
In all be Thou the end.

All may of Thee partake:
Nothing so small can be,
But draws, when acted for Thy sake,
Greatness and worth from Thee.

If done beneath Thy laws,
E'en servile labors shine:
Hallowed is toil if this the cause,
The meanest work divine.

Nature delights to have some outward comfort, which brings gratification of sense.

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But Grace seeks to be comforted by God alone, and delights in the Supreme Good above all visible things.

Nature does everything for gain, and for her own convenience, can do nothing unless she is paid for it, but hopes to get either an equivalent or an advantage in exchange for every kindness, or else praise or favor; and she desires that her deeds, gifts, and words should be highly estimated.

But Grace seeks nothing temporal, nor asks for any other prize than God alone for her reward; nor does she desire temporal things beyond what is necessary; except it be that she might employ them for the obtaining of things eternal.

Nature is fond of having many friends and relations, boasts of station and of birth, makes a point of pleasing those in her power, fawns on the rich, praises those who are similar to herself.

But Grace loves even enemies, is not puffed up by a crowd of friends, makes no account of place or birth, unless it is accompanied with greater virtue; she favours the poor rather than the rich, sympathizes more with the innocent than with the powerful, rejoices in the truth and not in deceit, ever exhorts the good to "covet earnestly the best gifts," and through virtues to grow like to the Son of God.

Nature soon complains of any lack or inconvenience.

Grace bears want with constancy.

Nature refers everything to herself, contends for self, and asserts herself.

But Grace refers all to God, from Whom all things originally come; she ascribes no good thing to herself, does not arrogantly presume, nor contend, nor prefer her own opinion to that of others, but in every feeling and opinion submits herself to the Eternal Wisdom and the Divine Judgment.

Nature loves ease and bodily rest.

But Grace cannot be idle, but gladly undergoes toil.

Nature respects temporal things, rejoices at earthly gains, grieves at losses, resents the slightest injurious word.

But Grace looks to things eternal, does not cling to temporal things, is not disturbed by losses, is not provoked by harsh words; because she places her treasure and her joy in Heaven, where nothing perishes.

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Nature is covetous, and more willing to receive than to give, and loves to have and to keep things to herself.

But Grace is kind and ready to share with others, shuns what is singular, is content with a little, thinks it more blessed to give than to receive.

Nature labours for her own advantage, and considers how much she may get from another.

But Grace does not seek her own advantage and comfort, but rather what may be for the good of many.

Nature is fond of receiving honour and respect.

But Grace faithfully ascribes all honour and glory to God.

Make that possible to me, O Lord, by grace, which appears impossible to me by nature.

Give me grace ever to desire and to will what is most acceptable to Thee, and most pleasing in Thy sight.

God of the soul! oh, help us to revere
The mighty marvels Thou hast centred here:
May no untimely frost nor blight of sin,
Blast that immortal life which buds within.

Teach us to bow before the inward light,—
The sense of wrong, the consciousness of right;
Kindle that faith which unto Thee would soar,
Know Thee, obey Thee, love Thee, and adore!

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

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Sixteenth Service.

"Whoso saveth his life shall lose it. And he that loseth his life, for My sake, shall find it." In these words it is declared that we must not save but lose, and lose unceasingly; and that only by renouncing what is destined to perish, our animal personality, shall we acquire our true life, which shall not and cannot perish.

Happy is the man who renounces everything which may bring a stain or burden upon his conscience.

Strive manfully; habit is overcome by counter-habit.

If you are wise enough to leave other men to themselves, they will be sure to leave you alone to transact your own business.

Do not busy yourself in others' concerns, nor entangle yourself in the affairs of the great.

Keep your eye always upon yourself in the first place, and especially admonish yourself in preference to admonishing all your friends.

If you have not the favour of men, do not on that account be disheartened; but let it be a matter of grave concern to you, that you are not living so well and circumspectly as it becomes a servant of God and a devout religious person to live.

Be not proud of your height, or good looks, for a sickness may soon disfigure or deform you.

Do not take pleasure in thinking of your gifts or abilities, lest you displease God, from Whom we hold whatever good capacity we naturally have.

You should not reckon yourself better than others, lest perhaps in the eyes of God, Who knows what is in man, you are considered worse.

Be not vain of your good works, because God's judgment is different oftentimes from man's; and what is pleasing to the one is displeasing to the Other.

If there is any good in yourself, believe that there is more in others, that you may preserve your humility.

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It will not hurt you to put yourself under others; but it will be most hurtful to you to put yourself before others — even before one.

The lowly have continual peace, but the heart of the proud is continually disturbed by jealousy and indignation.

"Leave all, and you shall find all; leave your desires, and you shall find rest."

Give your mind to this, and when you have put it into practice, you shall understand all things.

O Lord, this is not the work of a day nor child's play; indeed, in this short sentence all Religious perfection is summed up.

My son, you ought not to be turned aside, nor at once cast down, when you hear what is the way of the perfect; but you should rather be stirred up to higher things, or at least to pant with desire for them.

Would that it were so with you and that you had reached such a point as to be no longer a lover of self, but that you were willing simply to obey My bidding, expressed, it may be, through some spiritual guide; then you would indeed please Me, and you would pass all your life in joy and peace.

You have yet many things to forsake, and unless they are entirely given up to Me, you will not obtain what you seek.

It is hard to leave off that which we are accustomed to, and harder still to go against our own will.

But if you do not conquer little and easy things, when will you overcome those which are more difficult?

Resist at the very first your inclination, and give up bad habits, lest, perchance, you become more and more bound by them.

O, if you would but consider what peace you may gain for yourself, and what joy for others, by well-doing, I believe you would be more concerned about your spiritual progress.

He who looks out for the more lax and easy way, will always be in distress; because something or another will be sure to chafe him.

Do you think that men of the world suffer nothing or little? You would not find it to be so, even if you asked those who lived most luxuriously.

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But you will say, "They have many pleasures, and they do what they like, and therefore their troubles sit lightly upon them."

Be it so, that they have what they desire, but how long do you think it will last?

Put yourself always in the lowest place, and the highest shall be given you; for the highest does not stand without the lowest.

Desire not thou too greatly
For, like fire, destroying what it enfolds,
So is desire.

May the Lord be with us and keep us in all our ways. May He help us to reach that higher and better life wherein we shall seek to do the will of God rather than our own will. May He lead us into everlasting life. Amen.

Seventeenth Service.

My son, he who strives to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraws himself from grace; and he who seeks to enjoy things alone, forfeits the advantages which are in common.

God does well in bestowing the grace of consolation, but man does ill by not at once giving all back at once with thanksgiving.

And on this account the gifts of grace cannot flow into us; because we are ungrateful to the Giver, and do not cause them all to flow back to their original source.

For grace is ever rightly his who gives or returns thanks; and from the proud shall be taken away that which is always given to the lowly.

I do not desire such a consolation as would remove the spirit of compunction from me; nor do I wish for such a power of prayer as would lead me into pride.

For not everything which is high is holy; nor everything that is sweet, good; nor every desire, pure; nor everything we love, dear to God.

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I wish for the grace which will make me more humble, and give me holy fear, and a greater willingness to renounce myself.

Truly vain-glory is an evil pest, the greatest vanity; because it draws away from true glory, and despoils us of heavenly grace.

What you do for others shall have success, what you undertake to please yourself shall fail.

What others say shall be listened to; what you shall say shall be regarded as of no importance; others shall ask and receive, and you shall ask and be refused.

Others shall be spoken of as great men, but concerning you they shall not say a word.

Others shall have charge of this or that, but you shall be considered as fit for nothing.

Nature will sometimes feel sad at this, but if you bear it silently you will reap much fruit.

"Be guarded," says a certain one, "be guarded, and do not repeat what I say;" and whilst I am silent about it, and think he is keeping it secret, he tells it himself, who had forbidden me to do so; and thus, having immediately betrayed both me and himself, he goes his way.

From prattlers and careless men, protect me, O Lord, lest I fall into their hands, or follow their bad example.

Give to my lips truth and firmness, and remove far from me a deceitful tongue.

What I do not like to bear from others, I ought myself in every way to avoid.

O what a good thing it is, and what peace it brings not to talk about others, and not to believe indiscriminately all that is said, nor to give it currency; to lay one's self open only to a few, and always to seek after Thee, the Searcher of the heart.

Nor should we be carried away with every wind of words, but we should be guided by the desire of doing all our actions, inward and outward, according to the good pleasure of Thy Will.

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How safe it is for the preservation of heavenly grace, to avoid the notice of men, and not to wish for what wins the admiration of the world; but to pursue with the utmost care what tends to amendment of life and fervour.

How many have been injured through their virtue having become known and specially praised!

How healthily has grace grown up, when unnoticed in this fragile life — a life entirely made up of temptation and conflict!

O Thou, who art of all that is
Beginning both and end,
We follow Thee through unknown paths,
Since all to Thee must tend:
Thy judgments are a mighty deep
Beyond all fathom line;
Our wisdom is the childlike heart,
Our strength to trust in Thine.

We bless Thee for the skies above,
And for the earth beneath,
For hopes that blossom here below
And wither not with death;
But most we bless Thee for Thyself,
O Heavenly Light within,
Whose dayspring in our hearts dispels
The darkness of our sin.

Be Thou in joy our deeper joy,
Our comfort when distressed;
Be Thou by day our strength for toil,
And Thou by night our rest.
And when these earthly dwellings fail
And Time's last hour is come,
Be thou, O God, our dwelling-place
And our eternal home!

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Eighteenth Service.

Let every one be himself, and not try to be some one else. God, Who looked on the world He had made, and said it was all good, made each of us to be just what our own gifts and faculties fit us to be. Be that and do that, and so be contented. Let us not torment each other because we are not all alike, but believe that God knew best what He was doing in making us so different. So will the best harmony come out of seeming discords, the best affection out of differences, the best life out of struggle, and the best work will be done when each does his own work, and lets every one else do and be what God made him for.

My son, be not curious, nor concern yourself with useless anxieties. *What is this or that to thee? "Follow thou Me."*

For what is it to you, whether that man be such or such, or whether this man do or speak this or that?

You are not required to answer for others, but to give an account of your own self. Why then do you involve yourself with others?

Behold, I know all men, and I see all things which are done under the sun, and I know how it fares with each one, what he thinks, what he wills, and what is the drift of his intention.

And if Paul did try to please all in the Lord, and to make himself all things to all men, yet he also counted it a very small thing that he should be judged of man's judgment.

He laboured for the edification and salvation of others to the utmost of his ability and power, yet he could not avoid being sometimes judged or despised by others.

Therefore he committed all to God, to Whom all things are manifest, and by patience and humility defended himself against the tongues of those who spoke unjustly, and of those who devised vain and false charges, and of those who threw out accusations of whatever kind they wished.

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Who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a mortal man? To-day he is, and to-morrow he is gone.

What harm can any man do you either by his words or offensive actions? He will do more harm to himself than to you, and will not himself be able, whoever he may be, to escape the judgment of God.

Keep God before your eyes, and do not contend in a quarrellous manner.

But if for the present you seem to be beaten, and to suffer an unmerited exposure to shame, do not become indignant, nor lessen your crown through impatience.

But rather lift up your eyes to Me in Heaven, Who am able to deliver you from all shame.

You are not more holy, because you are praised; neither are you more vile, because you are blamed.

For you are what you are, neither can you be made better by what others say than what God sees you to be.

If you take good heed to what in yourself you are inwardly, you will not care what men may say about you.

Man sees the face, but God sees the heart.

Man considers the actions; God weighs the motives.

To do well always and to think little of one's self, is the mark of a lowly spirit.

Not to wish for any consolation from any creature, is a mark of great purity and inward confidence.

It is evident that the man who seeks no commendation from other men, has committed himself wholly to God.

"For not he that commendeth himself is approved" — saith blessed Paul — "but whom the Lord commendeth."

Practices which are not general ought not to be paraded before others, for things which are singular are more safely carried out in secret.

If you attend entirely to God and to yourself, external matters will but little affect you.

Where are you, when you are not with yourself?

And when you have run over all things, what advantage is it if you have neglected yourself?

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There is no more troublesome, no worse enemy of the soul than you yourself are to yourself, when you do not follow the guidance of the Spirit.

Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of meekness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man thinketh himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let each man prove his own work, and then shall he have his glorying in regard of himself alone, and not of his neighbour. For each man shall bear his own burden.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God, be honour, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Nineteenth Service.

Whene'er a noble deed is wrought,
Whene'er is spoken a noble thought,
  Our hearts, in glad surprise,
  To higher levels rise.

The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
  And lifts us unawares
  Out of all meaner cares.

Honour to those whose words or deeds
Thus help us in our daily needs,
  And by their overflow
  Raise us from what is low!

O pleasant and delightful service of God which makes a man truly free and holy!

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O service to be embraced and ever desired, which will gain the Supreme Good, and secure the joy which shall last for ever!

A good and devout man first arranges in his own mind those duties which he has outwardly to perform; neither does he in the performance of them yield to the desires of a corrupt inclination, but regulates his action by the dictates of sound reason.

Do what you can, and God will co-operate with your good endeavours. God takes more account of the dispositions of the doer than of the amount of his work.

He does much who does what he has to do well.

He does well who serves the common good rather than his own will.

Where is he to be found who is willing to render to God a disinterested service?

My son, rest your heart firmly on the Lord, and do not fear the judgment which man may pass on you, when your conscience declares you to be dutiful and innocent.

It is good and blessed to suffer in this way, nor will it be oppressive to the heart which is humble, and which trusts rather in God than in itself.

Many talk much, and therefore little trust is to be put in what they say.

Besides, it is not possible to satisfy all.

If you withdraw yourself from superfluous conversations and inquisitive restlessness, as also from hearkening to news and rumours, you will find that you have sufficient and fitting time for making good meditations.

Blessed be Thou, O Lord, my God, in all things which happen to us.

We are weak and unstable, we are easily deceived, and are entirely changed.

Who is the man who is able so cautiously and so circumspectly at all times to watch over himself, as not sometimes to fall into some deception or perplexity?

But he who trusts in Thee, O Lord, and seeks Thee with simplicity of heart, does not so easily slip.

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And if he does fall into some tribulation, however much involved he may be, he will more quickly be delivered out of it by Thee, or comforted by Thee, for Thou wilt not forsake, even unto the end, him who trusts in Thee.

A faithful friend is but seldom found, who abides steadfast through all his friend's troubles.

Thou, O Lord, Thou alone art most faithful at all times, and besides Thee there is none else.

Behold, all things are thine which I have, and with which I serve Thee, and yet (strange contrast!) Thou servest me, rather than I Thee.

Behold, Heaven and earth, which thou hast made for the service of man, are ready and waiting daily to do Thy Will whatsoever it may be.

And this is little: for even Angels Thou hast made and appointed for the service of man.

But that which surpasses all is that Thou Thyself hast deigned to serve man and hast promised to give Thyself to him.

What shall I give Thee for these thousands of benefits?

Would that I could serve Thee all the days of my life! Would that even for one day I could render thee a worthy service! Truly Thou art worthy of all service, all honour, and of eternal praise.

As body when the soul is fled,
As barren trees, decayed and dead,
Is faith; a hopeless, lifeless thing,
If not of righteous deeds the spring.

One cup of healing oil and wine,
One tear-drop shed on mercy's shrine,
Is thrice more grateful, Lord, to Thee,
Than lifted eye or bended knee.

By their fruits ye shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but the corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree

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cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself. Yea, a man will say, thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith.

May God help us to be fruitful in all good works, to his honour and glory and to our own uplifting. Amen.

Twentieth Service.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting;
And our hearts though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Be therefore ready for battle, if you wish to win the victory. *Without a conflict you cannot obtain the crown of patience.* But if you desire to be crowned, strive manfully, bear patiently.

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Without toil you cannot arrive at rest, nor without a battle can you attain to victory.

Strive as much as ever we can, we shall still be sure to fall short in many things.

Yet, always let us have something definite after which we are aiming; and let our resolves turn upon those things which we feel most of all hinder us.

There are two things which greatly help forward our amendment, namely, — to withdraw ourselves forcibly from that particular evil towards which we have a vicious tendency, and to earnestly pursue that particular good of which we stand mostly in need.

You should make it a point to avoid and overcome in yourself those faults, which are most displeasing to you in others.

Who has a sharper conflict than he who strives to conquer himself?

There is more toil in resisting our vices and passions than in hard manual labour.

The man who does not avoid small defects, will by little and little fall into greater.

You will always be glad in the evening, if you have spent the day profitably.

This must be our business: to conquer one's self, and daily to acquire more and more self-control, and to grow in virtue.

Strive now so to live, that you may be able in the hour of death to rejoice rather than to fear.

We are all liable to fall, yet you should be convinced that there is no one more liable to do so than yourself.

If we were to root out one bad habit every year, we should make considerable progress towards perfectness of life.

There is one thing which keeps many back from spiritual progress and earnest amendment of life, and that is, a horror of the difficulty and labour of the conflict.

Those mostly outstrip others in forming virtues, who strive to overcome those things which are most grievous and repugnant to them.

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Jesus has now many lovers of His Heavenly Kingdom, but few bearers of His Cross.

He has many desirous of His consolation, but few of His tribulation.

He finds plenty of companions of His table, but few of His abstinence.

Trial is often more profitable to you, than if you always had the prosperity which you wish for.

For at the first there comes to the mind simply a thought, then a strong imagination, after that, the feeling of pleasure, then an evil motion, then consent, and so by degrees the malignant enemy gains full possession, because he was not resisted at the beginning.

The longer a man continues slack in resisting temptation, the weaker he daily becomes, and the stronger becomes his adversary.

Some experience sore temptations at the commencement of their spiritual life, and some at the end; while some seem to suffer from life-long temptations.

Here a man is defiled by many sins, ensnared by many passions, restrained by many fears, racked by many cares, distracted by many interests, entangled by many vanities, encompassed by many errors, worn out by many labours, weighed down by many temptations, weakened by pleasures, and tortured by cravings.

"As the Father hath loved Me, I also love you," I said to My beloved disciples, whom indeed I sent not forth to temporal joys, but to great conflicts; not to honours, but to contempt; not to ease, but to toil; not to rest, but to bring forth much fruit with patience.

My son, remember these words.

Almighty God, when the struggle of life is over, and we approach the everlasting gates, may we look to Thee in joy, saying, — "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." Unto Thee we render thanksgiving and praise for ever and ever. Amen.

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Twenty-first Service.

O Thou Eternal One! whose presence bright
All space doth occupy, all motion guide;
Unchanged through Time's all-devastating flight;
Thou only God! There is no God beside!
Being above all beings! Mighty One!
Whom none can comprehend and none explore;
Who fill'st existence with Thyself alone;
Embracing all, — supporting, — ruling o'er —
Being whom we call God, — and know no more!

God, Who is eternal, incomprehensible, and of infinite power, does great and unsearchable things in Heaven and on earth, and His wonderful works are "past finding out."

If the works of God were of such a nature as to be easily comprehended by human reason, they could neither be called wonderful nor "unsearchable."

God Alone — the Eternal and Incomprehensible, Who fills all things — is the solace of the soul, and the true joy of the heart.

Seek advice from a man of wisdom and judgment, and prefer to be instructed by those who are better informed than yourself rather than to follow your own devices.

Our own opinion and senses often deceive us, for we see but a little way into things.

If you fancy that you know many things, and fairly understand them; remember that the things you do not know are many more than those you do know.

For often that which according to human opinion is a subject of praise, is in My sight worthy of blame.

The testimony of men is often erroneous; but My judgment is true; it shall stand and not be overthrown.

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It is for the most part hidden, and to few is made known, as to individual cases; yet it never errs, nor can err, although to the eyes of the foolish it may not seem right.

My son, avoid disputes about abstruse matters, and the mysterious judgments of God -- why this man is forsaken, and that man raised to so much grace; why also one should be so much afflicted, and another so highly exalted.

These things are beyond the reach of the human intellect, neither can any reasoning or argument unravel the mystery of the Divine judgments.

When, therefore, any men who are fond of subtleties enter upon these matters, reply to them in the words of the prophet, —

"*Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments.*" *And again* — "*The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.*"

Rest in my good will, and you shall suffer no harm.

If you seek this or that, and wish to be here or there for your own convenience, or for the sake of having your own way, you will never be at rest, nor free from anxiety; because in every thing there will be some drawback, and in every place there will be some one to oppose you.

For the just man will not be disturbed, whatever may happen to him from God; and if an unjust charge be laid against him, he will not be much concerned about it.

But neither will he allow a vain feeling of exultation, if by others he is justly vindicated.

Always desire and pray that the Will of God may be wholly accomplished in you.

Let Thy Will be mine, and let my will ever follow Thine, and fully accord with it.

Let there be between Thee and me but one will, so that I may love what Thou lovest, and abhor what Thou hatest; and let me not be able to will any thing which Thou dost not will, nor to dislike any thing which Thou dost will.

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The purposes of just men depend for their fulfilment rather upon the grace of God than upon their own wisdom; and, in whatever they take in hand, they always trust in His help.

For man proposes, but God disposes; for man's way is not in himself.

And being at once consoled and strengthened, he committed himself to the Divine Will, and his anxious disquietude ceased. He no longer wanted curiously to ask questions concerning his own future, but he rather sought to find out what was the acceptable and perfect will of God for the beginning and completing of every good work.

Almighty Father, when darkness gathers, and we cannot understand Thy way, make us wise to open the book of man's sad story, so that the past may shed its light upon to-day. Day by day dost Thou bring good out of evil. Teach us to have faith, to be quiet, and to do our duty quietly, leaving the issues in Thy hands. If our work be done in obscurity, and we live with none but God to see or care for us, help us to go on with our little labour with a quiet heart, resting on God. Lift us into nobleness; may we do Thine errands of life faithfully. Give us the heart of the little child, full of faith and trust. Let ours be the spirit that trusts in Thy spirit, confident that what God does is right. Amen.

Twenty-second Service.

The Lord will give strength unto His people;
The Lord will bless His people with peace.

My son, I have said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

All desire peace, but all do not attend to the things which bring true peace.

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My peace is with the lowly and meek in heart; your peace shall be in much patience.

If you will hear Me and follow My voice, you shall be able to enjoy much peace.

Place is but a slight protection, if fervour of spirit is wanting; neither shall that peace stand long which is sought from without, if this condition of heart lack a true foundation, that is, if you do not stand firmly in Me; — you may change, but not for the better.

Let not your peace rest in the utterances of men, for whether they put a good or bad construction on your conduct does not make you other than you are.

For this vice — a man's inordinate love of himself — is at the bottom of almost everything which has to be thoroughly overcome; when this evil is overcome and driven out, then there will be great peace, and immediate tranquillity.

But never to feel any disturbance, nor to suffer any trouble of mind or body, is not to be looked for in our present condition, but in the unbroken rest of eternity.

Therefore do not think that you have already found true peace, because at present you feel no heaviness; neither imagine that at present all is well, if you are not vexed by an enemy; nor that perfection is attained, if all things take place according to your desire.

Neither think much of yourself, nor consider yourself especially beloved, if you have a feeling of great devotion and sweetness; for these things are not the distinguishing mark of a true lover of virtue, neither does the progress or perfection of a man consist in such things.

In what, then, does it consist, O Lord?

In giving up yourself with all your heart to the Divine Will, not seeking the things which are your own, either in little or great, either in time or in eternity; so that, weighing all things with an equal balance, you may, without changing the expression of your face, always give thanks both in prosperity and adversity.

We might have much peace, if we would not busy ourselves with the sayings and doings of others which are not our concern.

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How can any one long remain in peace who meddles in other people's matters, and goes about in quest of causes of distraction, and is hardly ever quite recollected?

Blessed are the simple-minded, for they shall enjoy great peace.

Grant me a good end, and grant me a happy passage out of this world.

Remember me, my God, and direct me by the right way into Thy Kingdom. Amen.

O, what great peace and repose would he possess, who would banish every vain anxiety, and think only upon profitable and Divine subjects, and place his whole trust in God.

Grant to me — above all things to be desired — that I may rest in Thee, and that my heart may find its peace in Thee.

Thou art the peace of my heart, Thou, its sole repose; out of Thee all things are hard and unquiet.

In this very peace, that is, in Thyself, the Sole, the Supreme, the Eternal Good, I will sleep and take my rest. Amen.

Beneath the shadow of the Great Protection
The soul sits, hushed and calm.
Bathed in the peace of that divine affection,
No fever-heats of life, or dull dejection,
Can work the spirit harm.

Be happy, then, my heart,
That thou in all hast part, —
In all these outward gifts of time and sense,
In all the spirit's nobler influence.

Be happy now and ever,
Since from the Love Divine no power the soul shall sever:
For not our feeble nor our stormy past,
Nor shadows from the future backward cast;
Not all the gifts of evil far below,
Nor mountain-peaks of good which soar on high
Into the unstained sky,
Nor any power the universe can know;

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Nor the vast laws to whose control is given
The blades of grass just springing from the sod,
And stars within the unsounded depth of heaven, —
Can touch the spirit hid with Christ in God.
For naught that he has made, below, above,
Can part us from His love.

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you.
Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Amen.

Twenty-third Service.

In this vesture of time is wrapped the immortal nature; in this brave show of circumstance and form stands revealed the stupendous reality. Break forth, earth-bound spirit! and *be* that thou art, a living soul; communing with thyself, communing with God; and thou shalt find thy vision, eternity; thine abode, infinity; thy home, in the bosom of all-embracing love!

By two wings a man is raised above the earth, namely, by Simplicity and Purity. Simplicity must be in the motive, purity in the affection; simplicity aims at God, purity embraces and tastes Him.

No good action will hinder you, if you are inwardly free from all self-seeking.

If you intend, and seek nothing else but to please God and benefit your neighbour, you will enjoy the feeling of inward liberty.

If your heart were right, then every creature would be to you a mirror of life, and a book of holy teaching.

There is no creature so small and contemptible, that it cannot set before us something of the Goodness of God.

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If you were inwardly good and pure, you would see all things without hindrance, and understand them well.

A pure heart penetrates Heaven and Hell.

Whatever a man's inward state is, his judgment on external matters will accord with it.

If there is such a thing as joy in the world, certainly the man who is pure in heart possesses it.

And if anywhere tribulation or distress are to be found, an evil conscience will experience it the most.

God walks with the simple; He reveals Himself to the lowly; He gives understanding to little ones; He discloses His meaning to pure minds, and hides His grace from the curious and proud.

It would be a good thing, if — like young beginners — we could be taught anew the principles of a holy life; if, perchance, there might be hope of future amendment, and of greater spiritual progress.

If you had a good conscience, you would not much fear death.

It would be more to the purpose to shun sin than to flee from death.

If you are not prepared to-day, how will you be to-morrow?

To-morrow is an uncertain day, and how do you know that you will live till to-morrow?

Use the temporal: desire the eternal.

Many weak-minded and foolish people say, "Look how happy that man is! how rich and great he is! how powerful and exalted!"

But raise your eyes to heavenly riches, and you will see that all these temporal things are nothing, and are very uncertain and often burdensome, for they are never possessed without anxiety and fear.

A man's happiness does not consist in abundance of temporal goods, but a moderate supply is sufficient for him.

"*The kingdom of God is within you,*" *saith the Lord.*

It is a great thing to be even the least in Heaven, where all are great; because all shall be called, and shall be, the Sons of God.

"*The least shall be as a thousand,*" *and* "*the sinner of an hundred years shall die.*"

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For when the disciples asked who should be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, they received this answer: —

"*Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.*"

But souls that of His own good life partake,
He loves as His own self; dear as His eye
They are to Him: He'll never them forsake:
When they shall die, then God Himself shall die.
They live, they live in blest eternity.

Exalt ye the Lord our God,
And worship at His holy hill;
For the Lord our God is holy.
And blessed be His glorious name forever;
And let the whole earth be filled with His glory.
Amen and amen.

Twenty-fourth Service.

Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marble play!
Who hath not learned in hours of faith,
The truth, to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And love can never lose its own!

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My son, I am the Lord Who gives thee strength in the day of trouble. Come to Me, when it is not well with thee.

This is what most of all hinders heavenly consolation, that you are too slow in turning to prayer.

For before you earnestly seek Me, you seek oftentimes many other sources of consolation, and refresh yourself with external things.

And therefore it comes to pass that you get little assistance, until you realise that I am He Who delivers those who trust in Me; and that without Me there is no real help, no perfect counsel, no lasting remedy.

But now, having recovered yourself after the storm, grow strong again in the light of My mercies; for I am near (saith the Lord) to restore all things, not only entirely, but also abundantly, and to add to them.

You must not judge according to your present feelings, nor stick fast in any trouble, from whatever quarter it may come; nor receive it, as if all hope of getting over it were taken away.

Do not think that you are entirely forsaken, although for a time I may have sent some trouble upon you, or may have withdrawn some consolation, for so it happens to those who are travelling towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

And without doubt it is more expedient for you and the rest of My servants, to be tried in various ways, than to have everything your own way.

Write, read, sing, mourn, be silent, pray, bear opposition manfully; eternal life is worth all these conflicts, and greater than these.

There shall come peace in one day, which is known to the Lord. There shall not then be day nor night as now, but unchanging light, infinite brightness, unbroken peace, and secure rest.

You shall not say then, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" neither shall you cry, "Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged;" for death shall be swallowed up in victory, and health shall be unfailing, and there shall be no more anxiety, but blessed joy, and sweet and lovely companionship.

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Therefore you should be eager to progress, for in a little while you will receive the reward of your labours. Then shall there be no more fear or sorrow in your borders.

Now you will labour a little, and then you shall find great rest —yes, perpetual gladness.

If you continue faithful and fervent in your work, God will doubtless be faithful and bountiful in rewarding you.

I will reward you eternally for your short labour, and with infinite glory for transient shame.

Therefore you ought manfully to struggle through all, and with a firm hand to deal with the obstacles which are in your path.

For to him that overcometh is the manna given, and to him that ceases to struggle is reserved much misery.

Therefore, when we have read through, and searched into all, let this be our final conclusion — "That through much tribulation we must enter into the Kingdom of God."

O most blessed mansion of the City which is above!

O most bright day of eternity, which night does not darken, but which the highest Truth perpetually illuminates!

Day, ever joyful, ever secure, ever changeless!

O that that day would dawn, and that all these temporal things would have an end!

It shines indeed to the Saints with a bright and unceasing radiance, but to us wayfarers upon earth it is seen afar off as through a glass.

When will there be solid peace — peace unbroken and secure, peace within and without, peace on all sides steadfast?

When shall I contemplate the glory of Thy Kingdom?

When wilt Thou be all in all to me?

O when shall I be with Thee in Thy Kingdom, which from eternity Thou hast prepared for them that love Thee?

The hour will come when there shall be an end of all toil and tumult.

Poor and brief is all that passes away with time.

Do what you have to do, work faithfully in My vineyard; I will be your Reward.

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We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breath;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart-throbs.
He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.
Life is but a means unto an end; that end,
Beginning, mean and end to all things, God!

The Lord bless us and keep us; the Lord make His face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us; the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon us, and give us peace. Amen.

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3	Canst thou by searching find out God?	*Book of Job.*
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7	O Lord God, to Thee, therefore, do we lift up our eyes ...	*Martineau's Service Book.*
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18	Fear never but you shall be consistent	*R. W. Emerson.*
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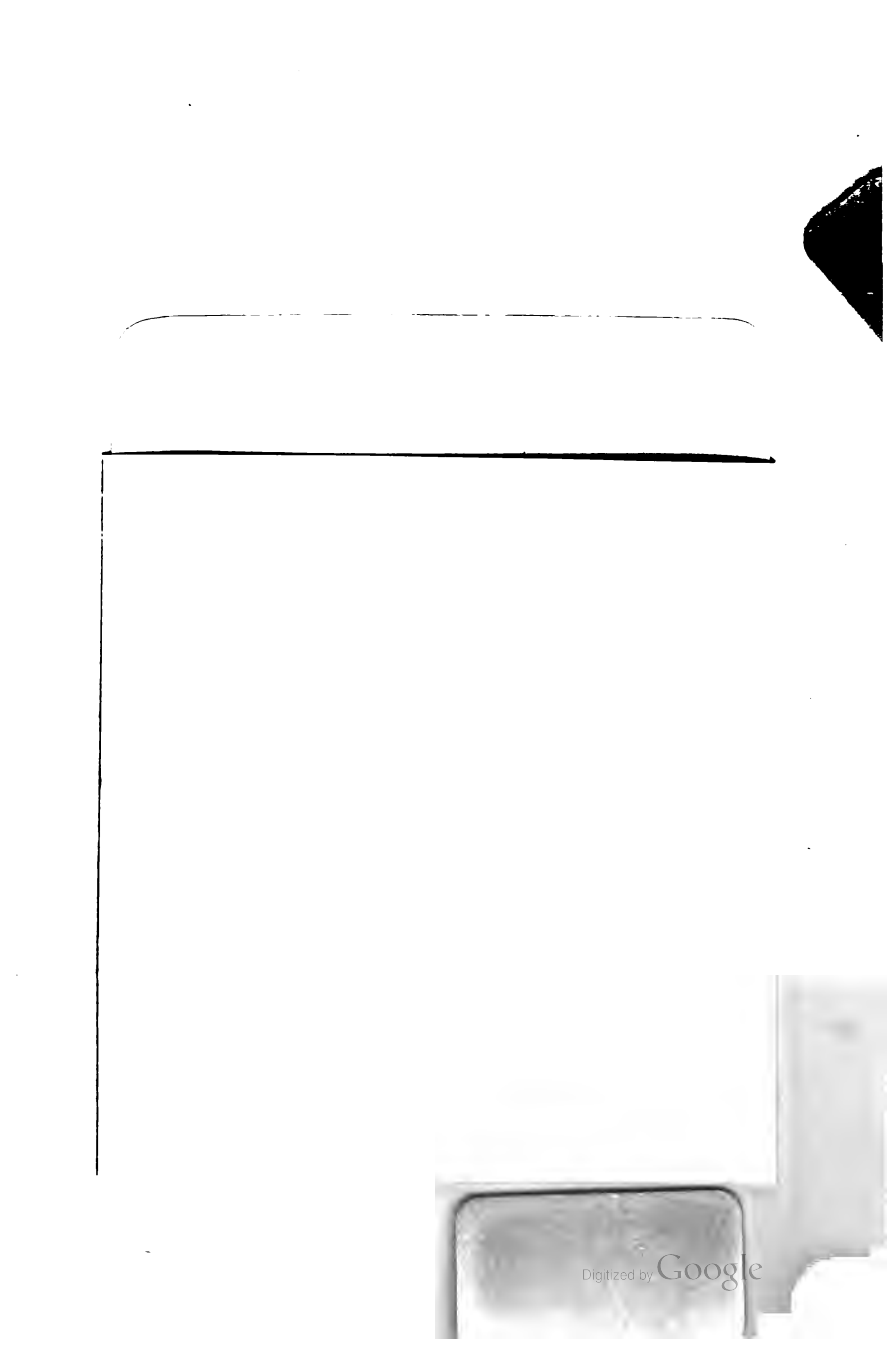
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